

REMARKS

After entry of this amendment, claims 7, 9, 10, 13, 17, 18, 20, 32 and 40-42 will be pending.

Claims 1 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,456,762 to Nishiki et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,307,626 to Miles et al. and U.S. Patent No. 5,776,674 to Ulmer. As claims 1 and 11 have been canceled, this rejection is now moot.

Claims 2-10, 12, 14-16, 19, 21-31 and 33-39 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,456,762 to Nishiki et al. and in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,307,626 to Miles et al. and U.S. Patent No. 5,776,674 to Ulmer as applied to claim 1 and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,574,255 to Caprara et al. As claims 2-6, 8, 12, 14-16, 19, 21-31 and 33-39 have been canceled, the rejection of these claims is now moot. Please see below with respect to claims 7, 9 and 10.

The Examiner has kindly noted the allowability of claims 7, 9, 10, 13, 17 and 18 if rewritten to include the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 7, 9, 10, 13 and 18 have been rewritten as suggested and therefore are in condition for allowance. Claim 17, dependent upon now allowable claim 13, did not require rewriting as a result of the amendment to claim 13.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the noted allowability of claims 20, 32, and 40-42.

If in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (415) 889-5700.

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Respectfully submitted,

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